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# Reporter's Notebook: Courtroom Glimpses of a Spy

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SAN FRANCISCO, May 1 — Why did John A. Walker Jr., the confessed leader of a Soviet spy ring, join the Ku Klux Klan?

In testimony this week at the espionage trial of a former Navy colleague, Mr. Walker said he became a member in the early 1980's to learn the names of other Klan followers in Virginia. Mr. Walker, then a private detective in Norfolk, testified that he was paid \$1,000 for the mission by a client who never gave his name.

The disclosure that Mr. Walker was paid to join the Klan has prompted defense lawyers for Jerry A. Whitworth, the man charged with espionage, to argue that Mr. Walker must have been an informer for the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which has long tracked Klan membership.

If true, the lawyers might attempt to show that Mr. Walker began cooperating with the Government long before his guilty plea last year to spying charges, which could lead to an argument that Mr. Whitworth was entrapped by the Government.

The Government has denied that it used Mr. Walker as an informer.

Mr. Walker has been described by law-enforcement officials as the most damaging Soviet spy to operate in the United States in decades. His spy ring, he acknowledged, supplied the Soviet Union with some of the Navy's most precious secrets about codes and coding equipment.

But on the witness stand, Mr. Walker looked not at all the master of international espionage. He is paunchy and baldish and he wore the same ill-fitting gray business suit nearly every day.

His attitude, boastful at times, was that of a confident man describing his rise up the career ladder — in this case, from a minor seller of stolen Government secrets to leader of a

four-member Navy spy ring that included his brother and son. More than once he referred to espionage as a good-paying "business."

His manner was calm, and he spoke slowly in a flat, nasal voice, occasionally with a slight Virginia twang.

He acknowledged bringing his brother Arthur and son, Michael, into the operation and trying to entice his daughter Laura and half-brother, Gary. But he argued that he was a "good-hearted guy" trying to do his relatives a favor by getting them on the "gravy train" of Soviet cash.

Both Mr. Walker and his Soviet contacts apparently held the F.B.I. in contempt. His comments about the bureau provided some of the few amusing moments of his testimony.

"I didn't see the F.B.I. as any threat unless some catastrophic accident, like a tree falling on my car on the way to a drop," Mr. Walker said.

Under questioning by a prosecutor, Mr. Walker described an elaborate system for passing secret information to Soviet agents, using places along secluded roads outside Washington.

At one point, Mr. Walker said, he had been told by a Soviet contact to leave the material along the roads on Saturday nights only. Why Saturday?

Soviet agents, he explained, believed that "the F.B.I. doesn't work on weekends." A smile crossed his face as he made the remark, and even an F.B.I. official sitting nearby joined in the courtroom laughter.

"If they don't, who arrested you?" asked Judge John P. Vukasin, apparently recalling that Mr. Walker had been arrested by F.B.I. agents a few hours after making a drop late one Sunday night last May.

Replied Mr. Walker: "I didn't say I agreed with them, your honor."

The Rules of Espionage, according

to John A. Walker Jr. and his Soviet contacts:

Rule 1: Use code names. Mr. Walker said that his Soviet contacts assigned single-letter code names to the members of the spy ring. He said these allowed him to discuss members of the ring freely in sidewalk conversations in Vienna, where he often met with Soviet agents.

Rule 2: Read. Mr. Walker said a Soviet official advised him to read "The French Connection," which tells of the exploits of New York City police officers trying to crack a drug-smuggling ring. According to Mr. Walker, the official felt that the book provided "a good description" of how officers could tail a suspect.

Rule 3: Hide secret documents where no customs agent would look. Mr. Walker said that Mr. Whitworth took pictures of Navy documents using a tiny Minox camera and hid the film in a box of cotton swabs. "You remove a layer of Q-Tips and put the Minox film there," Mr. Walker explained.

Rule 4: Do not put espionage proceeds in a bank account. "It would call attention to income I couldn't explain," Mr. Walker said. He stored tens of thousands of dollars in a safe-deposit box.

Rule 5: Do not expect your money immediately. Mr. Walker said Soviet officials would not pay for secret documents until after they had had a chance to look them over. "The money lagged," he said. "The Soviets took time to consider the importance of the material."

He thought for a minute. "This was not a c.o.d. operation."

Rule 6: Dress warmly. Mr. Walker said most of his Vienna meetings with Soviet agents were held outdoors, in winter. The Austrian capital was so cold, Mr. Walker said, that he once bought a pair of battery-heated socks to prevent frostbite.